

FOCUS ON ISSAQUAH SCHOOLS



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FOCUS ON ISSAQUAH SCHOOLS

ISSAQUAH SCHOOL DISTRICT JOB FAIR 2017

The ISD Human Resources Department is hosting an employment fair for the 2017-2018 School Year

April 19 3:00-7:00pm

The employment fair will be held at the Issaquah School District Administrative Building
565 NW Holly St, Issaquah, WA 98027

Contact:

ISD HR Dept/Bethany Rogers
425.837.7060



STAY CONNECTED



INNOVATIVE GIBSON EK HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATES STUDENTS THROUGH PURSUING PASSIONS

Article written by Jaime Cao. Jaime is a sophomore at Gibson Ek High School and interns at the Sammamish Reporter. Jaime is also passionate about fashion and writes her own fashion blog called the Jaime Issue.

Imagine attending a school where a student is given the opportunity to pursue their passions through interest-based learning and real-world internships. For students at Gibson Ek, Issaquah School District's new innovative high school, this vision has become a reality.

Gibson Ek students can be found collaborating with peers, working with an advisor one-on-one, and learning through project work in one of the large, open work spaces that the school has to offer. In addition to learning in school, students are expected to attend an internship outside of school two days a week where they work with adults who match their post high school career goals.

Evon Mahesh, a sophomore at Gibson Ek, for one, is interning at Pride Foundation in Seattle. His internship includes working on a public education project that lifts voices of transgender people and shares their experiences to educate the community.

Mahesh is interested in activism, human rights in particular. "My internship ties in perfectly with my interests," said Mahesh. "It's really preparing me for adult work because I'm working in an office with adults around me... if I'm working in the field, it's really giving me a baseline of the knowledge I'll need to have."

Student Dana Dewitt, intern at artEAST, is currently working to help organize a gala that the art center annually hosts. Dewitt exclaims that she has had many new learning experiences, including how to advertise using email marketing, track auction items, and how to contact businesses to ask for donations. Not only is she enjoying the work, but also collaborating with the artists.

Students spend a majority of their time at Gibson Ek working on projects individually or collaboratively. Students are expected to go through planning and research phases before starting the process of producing their final project. To help students reach their full potential with project work, the school is designed around labs such as textiles, science, art, design, production, and technology. These work spaces include 3D printers, sewing machines, laser cutters, and much more.

Currently, Gibson Ek student Averie Hasselbalch is working on a human joint project. She will be making a booklet of different drawings, along with writing a report. Hasselbalch got her inspiration for this project after she received knee surgery and was "very interested in how it worked." Connecting to her project in terms of aspirations after graduating, Hasselbalch said she is "starting to lean towards medicine and health" and wants to go into anesthesiology.

Other examples of projects being created and worked on throughout the school include creating websites, putting together a fish tank, producing animation projects, building a half-pipe, designing clothes, producing a documentary, building a full size R2D2, and creating a recording studio.

The innovative high school is designed for students who want to thrive and engage in their learning in a new way. Students at Gibson Ek are able to become the leaders of their learning within a vibrant and supportive community, a factor that cannot always be achieved for students in traditional high schools.



ISSAQUAH SCHOOLS FOUNDATION — NOURISH EVERY MIND

The Issaquah Schools Foundation's *Nourish Every Mind* events let you walk in students' shoes without leaving your table. *Nourish Every Mind* is the Foundation's signature fundraising event, held annually since 1999. This year's event commemorates the Foundation's 30th anniversary, and the luncheon will be held for the first time at the Meydenbauer Center in Bellevue.

While attendees enjoy a catered breakfast or lunch, Issaquah School District students and teachers share stories about the Foundation's impact in their schools. Past speakers have included a first-grade student explaining how Foundation-funded books ignited her love of reading, middle schoolers enthusing about Foundation-funded financial literacy and robotics programs, and a high school student describing how the Foundation's Healthy Youth Initiative changed his life.

"Sharing students' struggles and triumphs and learning how I can make a difference is the best hour I spend all year," says Lisa Callan, parent, Foundation volunteer, and School District Board President, who has attended several *Nourish*

Every Mind events. While there is no cost to attend the event, guests are encouraged to support the Foundation with a one-time or recurring donation. Contributions fuel success for students in every ISD school through more than 40 programs that address needs not funded by the state. Generous event sponsors ensure that 100% of donated funds are used to support students.

To attend one or both of the *Nourish Every Mind* events or for more information, contact the Foundation at 425.391.8557 or info@isfdn.org.

19th Annual *Nourish Every Mind* Luncheon
Thursday, May 11
12:00 – 1:00 p.m.
Meydenbauer Center
11100 NE 6th St., Bellevue

4th Annual *Nourish Every Mind* Breakfast
Wednesday, May 17
7:30 – 8:30 a.m.
Eastridge Church
24205 SE Issaquah-Fall City Rd., Issaquah



SAVE THE DATE!

19th Annual Luncheon Thursday, May 11, 2017 12:00 pm-1:00 pm Meydenbauer Center, Bellevue	4th Annual Breakfast Wednesday, May 17, 2017 7:30 am-8:30 am Eastridge Church, Issaquah
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Call to register today.
425.391.8557
Learn more at isfdn.org

CREATING A CULTURE OF KINDNESS THROUGH DISTRICT-WIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

The Issaquah School District continues to build on its culture of kindness and strong commitment to supporting our students through a new Positive Behavior and Social-Emotional Support (PBSES) framework introduced in our elementary and middle schools this year. This framework uses evidence-based practices and offers multiple levels of support to serve all of our students both academically and socially. We have invested in PBSES because research shows that when a school climate is positive and predictable, students feel safer, have better academic performance, and make better behavior choices.

to promote respect, positive relationships, and predictable, proactive learning environments so that students can lead socially and emotionally safe and healthy lives. Our guiding goals for PBSES are the following:

- Students and staff understand and are mindful of their own social/emotional functioning.
- Staff demonstrate flexibility and empathy as they respond to individual student needs.
- Staff implement explicit strategies for establishing, maintaining and restoring relationships.
- Staff provide a progressive response to problem behaviors through structured Tier 1, 2, and 3 interventions.
- Students experience a reduction in unhealthy externalizing and internalizing behaviors.

The Issaquah School District has been leading the way in addressing the importance of social emotional learning of students for the past several years. Three years ago we contracted with Swedish Hospital to add mental health counselors in our high schools and in 2015-2016, we added Student Support Coaches at each of our elementary and middle schools. These Student Support Coaches are now providing direct in-classroom support as we implement the PBSES framework.

Our work recently caught the attention of Governor Jay Inslee and his wife, who visited Grand Ridge Elementary School in January to talk with staff and observe PBSES in action in a classroom. We were honored to offer Governor Inslee an opportunity to experience first-hand how PBSES is benefiting both students and teachers by improving the school and the classroom learning environment here in the Issaquah School District. Our vision for PBSES is

Parent information nights will be held in April for parents to hear more about PBSES, discover what is happening with PBSES at their school, and learn some strategies to support their students at home.

If you have questions, please contact the PBSES Coordinator, Jen Rogers at rogersj@issaquah.wednet.edu or 425-837-7097.



PBSES

Positive Behavior and Social Emotional Support



THANK YOU FROM THE ISSAQUAH PTSA COUNCIL

Thank you Volunteers!

In Issaquah, the PTSA is proud of its partnership with the school district. We collaborate with school staff to support students, families and staff within our schools and at the district level through the Issaquah PTSA Council. This partnership is successful because of the amazing parents and community members who volunteer their time and expertise through the school PTA or PTSA.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the volunteers who support their school. Whether you serve on the board of directors, chair a committee, or clean up after an event, you are amazing! Your volunteer service is one of the ingredients that make the Issaquah School District special.

One of the easiest ways to help support your school community is to join your school's PTA/PTSA. The Issaquah School District enjoys the support of more than 14,000 PTSA members.

These members organize science fairs, book fairs, cultural nights, math nights, walk-a-thon's, auctions, volunteer in the classrooms, and so much more throughout the district. Issaquah PTA/PTSA volunteers take pride in their work and it shows!

Volunteering in schools is a great way to build strong connections with the staff and let your child know how important their education is to you. If you cannot volunteer during the school day, there are plenty of other options, including evening events and work from home opportunities. I encourage you to check out the volunteer page on your school's PTA/PTSA website or Facebook page to learn more.

To everyone volunteering in the schools, thank you for your hard work, your time, and your dedication to your school community. You are appreciated more than you will ever know.

Becky Gordon, President
Issaquah PTSA Council

2016-2017 DISTRICT REFLECTIONS RECEPTION HOSTED BY THE PTSA COUNCIL



A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

As a person who has devoted their entire career to education, lifelong learning is something I value highly. Becoming a lifelong learner requires critical thinking skills, the kinds of skills we teach students in our



Ron Thiele

classrooms every day. Critical thinking includes being open to taking in new information and ideas, analyzing and evaluating that data and being willing to form new opinions if the learning leads you there. I recently had just such an opportunity when members of our community approached me about starting our schools later in the day to accommodate the sleep needs and patterns of teens. Even when presented with credible research from the Centers for Disease Control and the American Pediatric Sleep Academy, I was skeptical. Like many of the individuals who participated in our community Thought Exchange process, I wondered if changing the start times later would simply result in teens staying up even later and not gaining any extra sleep.

However, the more I researched and read, the more convinced I became of the need to support healthy sleep habits for our students. I also became more aware of the important health benefits of sleep for adults as well as children. Just as we all need healthy eating habits and regular exercise, we need healthy sleep habits. That is why starting and ending our schools later is just one component of supporting the health and well-being of our

students. We have made a commitment to provide more education on the importance of sleep to our overall health. We also hope to partner with groups, such as our amazing PTSA, to apprise parents of ways to establish good sleeping habits for the whole family.

Our new estimated bell times schedule is posted on the Issaquah School District website homepage under "Hot Topics." We may need to adjust those posted times plus or minus 2 to 3 minutes based on the recommendation of our transportation department folks, who are testing our new schedule. Please talk to your school about school-specific times within each building for lunch and other activities.

I sincerely believe that changing our school start and end times is the right thing to do. If you did not have an opportunity to read my November 10, 2016 letter announcing the change to the community, I encourage you to read it for all of the details about the process by which our district arrived at this change. That letter is also posted on our website. Watch our Facebook and Twitter feeds for links to research and tips on improving the quality of sleep for the good health of us all.

MORE DEMAND THAN SUPPLY – TOO FEW TEACHERS ENTERING AND STAYING IN THE PROFESSION

On May 9, 2016, The Seattle Times published an article entitled "Washington not alone in hunt for teachers, new report says" that revealed the serious shortage of teachers experienced by school districts in Washington as well as public schools all across the United States. According to the article, demand for new K-12 teachers in Washington has risen by 250 percent with increased graduation requirements and mandated smaller class sizes cited as contributing factors. A similar article, entitled "The teacher shortage crisis is here" published by US News and World Report in November 2016, went further to explain, "At a time when public school enrollment is on the upswing, large numbers of teachers are headed for retirement... Meanwhile, enrollment in teacher preparation programs is dropping dramatically, falling 35 percent nationwide in the last five years." The report noted teacher shortages are especially severe in special education, math, and science, as well as bilingual or English language learner education. If the trend continues, the U.S. Department of Education projects that by next year, the annual shortfall could grow to 112,000 teachers. Compounding the issue in Washington State, there is a dramatic shortage of substitute teachers as well.

and professional development programs to ensure the certificated staff we hire are equipped, supported, and enthusiastic about teaching in the Issaquah School District. We are also working with city and county partners to address issues such as affordable housing and transportation to remove potential barriers that may affect a decision to work in our district.

The good news is that we have outstanding staff members working for us in the Issaquah School District. We strive to offer an excellent environment for staff new to the profession to refine their skills and feel confident and supported in their learning environments. For our existing instructional staff, we focus on providing plenty of opportunities to grow professionally in a team environment of caring people who are committed to making an important and positive contribution to the lives of their students. Perhaps Skyline High School teacher Zoe Jiang said it best, "Issaquah is not only a place worth working for, but it is also a big family!"

If you or someone you know is interested in exploring a career with the Issaquah School District, consider attending our job fair on April 19 from 3:00-7:00 p.m. at our administration building located at 565 NW Holly Street in Issaquah, or contact the Human Resources Department at 425.837.7060. A complete listing of open teaching positions—as well as open positions for substitutes, educational assistants, food service, custodians and bus drivers—is available under the Career Opportunities tab on our website at www.issaquah.wednet.edu/CareerOpportunities.



SUMMER SCHOOL 2017

Summer school registration is open for elementary, middle, and high school students, including credit recovery and grade improvement. Please visit our website for more information:

issaquah.wednet.edu/academics/programs/summerschool

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION 2017

Kindergarten registration is underway for Fall 2017. If you have not already picked up and completed a packet, please visit your local school to do so! Information about kindergarten registration can be found on our website:

issaquah.wednet.edu/district/Kregistration2017

ISD EMPLOYEES TAKE PART IN CULTURAL COMPETENCY AT LATEST TEACHER WORK DAY TRAINING

January 30 was a non-school day for students, but educators in the Issaquah School District gathered together for an important professional development training focused on cultural competency. With our community and student population becoming more and more diverse, the Issaquah School District has made increasing our knowledge and skills about different cultures

and races a priority to support teaching and learning for all students. Staff participated in various breakout sessions throughout the day and heard a keynote from Dr. Caprice Hollins. Dr. Hollins, a former Seattle School District Equity Director, consults with districts nationally and is the co-author of *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Facilitating Conversations on Race*.



...demand for new K-12 teachers in Washington has risen by 250 percent...

Here in the Issaquah School District, we are not immune to the reality that we are operating in an extremely competitive market for highly qualified certificated staff. Therefore, we are in frequent contact with our local legislators and representatives from local colleges and universities to help develop solutions to retain current staff and attract new teachers into the profession. As our school enrollment continues to become more diverse, our hope and our goal is to attract an instructional workforce in our district that reflects that diversity, even as the national trend is in the opposite direction. To these ends, we are extending our recruiting efforts and put a great deal of focus on mentoring

ISSAQUAH SCHOOL DISTRICT 411



Apply Now!

425.837.7000
issaquah.wednet.edu

MEET THE ISSAQUAH SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

The local school board is a uniquely American institution that has made public schools flexible and responsive to the needs of local communities. It represents a continuing commitment to local citizen control and decision-making in education.

The Issaquah School Board generally meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month with a few exceptions. Community linkage meetings are also held prior to board meetings throughout the school year.

Letters to the School Board can be mailed to:

Board of Directors
Issaquah School District
565 NW Holly Street
Issaquah, WA 98027-2899

Only one copy of correspondence addressed to the Board of Directors is necessary. Board members will each receive copies.



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